

## Upcoming Equity Accountability System Webinars and Request for Feedback on CS Project Selection Proposal Deadline Today

September 16, 2022

### Program News

- **Upcoming Equity Accountability System Webinar**

On Tuesday, October 4, 2022, at 12:00 p.m. CT, the Program Administrator and IPA will hold an informational webinar, formally introducing the Equity Accountability System (EAS), outlined in Chapter 10 of the [Final 2022 Long-Term Plan](#). The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act amended the Illinois Power Agency Act to expand the “priority access to the clean energy economy for business and workers from communities that have been excluded from economic opportunities in the energy section, have been subject to disproportionate levels of pollution, and have disproportionately experienced negative public health outcomes.” To advance that objective, the Act directs the Agency to establish an Equity Accountability System, which includes the Minimum Equity Standards requirement for all renewable energy procurement applications to the Agency, the establishment of an Equity Eligible Contractor category, and equity requirements for competitive procurement processes. The EAS provides an exciting opportunity to expand the benefits of solar participation throughout Illinois.

This webinar, the first in a two-part introductory series, will provide an overview of the EAS, discussion of key elements, its applicability to the Adjustable Block Program including future opportunities and requirements for Approved Vendors and Designees, and available support from the Program Administrator. Participants are encouraged to ask questions during the Question & Answer section of the webinar. All AVs and Designees are strongly encouraged to attend the webinar series or to view the recording to ensure comprehension and compliance with program requirements. The Program Administrator will provide AVs and Designees with an Attestation to indicate their viewing of the webinar series, provide a point of contact, and share information about how these requirements will be incorporated into any employee training materials. The meeting will be recorded and posted on the Program website as well as the [ABP YouTube Channel](#) for later viewing by anyone who cannot attend.

- **Waiver of Net Metering Requirement For Projects Where Net Metering is Unavailable**

The IPA is announcing a waiver process for AVs and Designees to make offers to customers to install solar projects for which net metering is unavailable. Section IV of the [Consumer Protection Handbook](#) prohibits making offers to customers if the customer cannot utilize net metering.

The IPA’s primary concern is that AVs and Designees do not market or sell Distributed Generation solar projects to customers who cannot take advantage of net-metering, unless the customer is fully aware of the unavailability of net metering and how that affects overall project financials. The Agency recognizes that some customers may, with full understanding of the issue, still wish to move forward with a solar project. Therefore, the IPA will institute the following waiver procedure.

1. Ensure customer understands unavailability of net metering – The AV/Designee that discusses the solar project offer with the customer must ensure that the customer understands what net metering

is, that net metering credits will not be available for the solar project, and how this will impact the overall financial benefits that the customer will receive from the solar project.

2. Customer signs acknowledgment form before contract – The customer must sign the new Net Metering Unavailability Customer Acknowledgement form before signing the installation contract.
3. AV/Designee submits form – The AV/Designee must submit the completed customer acknowledgment form to [admin@illinoisabp.com](mailto:admin@illinoisabp.com) prior to submission of the Part I application.

The [Net Metering Unavailability Customer Acknowledgement form](#) is available on the Program website.

**Please note that the IPA cannot offer a waiver to the statutory requirement that distributed generation projects supported by the ABP must be interconnected to their utility or electric co-operative.**

- **Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) Prevailing Wage Training Webinars**

As noted in the [2022 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan](#), most Adjustable Block Program projects must comply with the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act, which requires that employees engaged in construction activities related to a project be paid prevailing wage; minimum compensation levels are set by the Illinois Department of Labor. Information regarding prevailing wage can be found on the Program's [Prevailing Wage Hub](#). IDOL is hosting informational webinars on prevailing wage requirements and answer questions as time allows during scheduled webinars, which will be held via WebEx at the following upcoming dates and times.

- Thursday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10:30 a.m. CT – Join link:  
<https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=m89e362981092112d55fbd7eeb43f4d1b>
- Thursday, October 6 at 10 a.m. CT – Join link:  
<https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=m5d05852b52473224596a137b72521578>
- Wednesday, November 16 at 3:20 p.m. CT – Join link:  
<https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=mbcef9ff65828f936043500c4b3a33d26>

- **Ongoing Program Portal Updates**

The Program Administrator continues to optimize the new Program Portal. A scheduled release of improvements was made last night, on September 15, 2022, that included the following:

- Distributed Generation Disclosure Form CSV template released
- Updates to Disclosure Forms reported to Program Administrator

## **Transition Updates**

- **Project Application Review Timing**

As referenced in the Agency's [August 5, 2022 announcement](#), the Program Administrator is working through a significant backlog of project applications that existed prior to portal closure. The Agency and Program Administrator are working to establish an aggressive yet realistic schedule for processing the high volume of existing applications to become current in reviewing Part I applications submitted on or after September 1, 2022, in the order in which they are received. We are confident that processing times will soon improve with the Program Administrator's growing project processing team, and that the lag time from project submittal to project review, which is currently around two and a half months, will soon be shortened. We are appreciative of the continued patience of Approved Vendors, Designees, and their customers during this time.

- **Program Administrator Office Hours**

To support AVs and Designees experiencing technical difficulties with use of the Portal or in resolving other challenges, the Program Administrator is pleased to continue offering open "office hours" to answer questions, provide support, and gather feedback. Sessions are held with individual AV or Designee points of contact, via Zoom, utilizing a waiting room for individual appointment privacy. Many Approved Vendors have

taken advantage of the office hours, which also provide an opportunity to establish direct relationships and increase support from the Program Administrator as needed. Questions and answers arising from the hours will be anonymously shared so that all stakeholders can benefit from the information. Upcoming office hours are planned for the following dates and times, with more dates expected to follow:

- Wednesday, September 21 – 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. CT – Join link: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302>
- Wednesday, September 28 – 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. CT – Join link: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302>
- Wednesday, October 5 – 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. CT – Join link: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302>

**REMINDER:** All transition updates can be found on the [ABP Transition Hub webpage](#).

**CONTACT US:** For Portal, application, or Program-specific questions and inquiries, please contact [admin@illinoisabp.com](mailto:admin@illinoisabp.com) or call 877-783-1820.

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## **Requirements and Reminders**

- **Traditional Community Solar (TCS) Project Selection Proposal – Request for Stakeholder Feedback**

On September 1, the IPA released an initial proposal and stakeholder feedback request on Traditional Community Solar project selection and scoring criteria. Through this proposal, the IPA encourages robust and comprehensive stakeholder feedback for the TCS selection process. Please review [the full proposal](#) and submit responses **by today, Friday, September 16, 2022**, to [IPA.Solar@illinois.gov](mailto:IPA.Solar@illinois.gov) with the subject “Responder’s Name – Response to TCS Scoring Strawman Proposal Feedback Request.”

Please keep in mind that applications for Traditional Community Solar projects (and TCS projects within the EEC and Public Schools categories) will not be available until November 1, 2022, once this feedback process is complete.

- **Program Year 2022-2023 Resources Available for Stakeholders**

On September 1, 2022, the launch of the Program Year 2022-2023, a variety of resources were released for Prospective and Approved Vendors and Designees. Resources are available at the following links.

- [Approved Vendor Application](#)
- [Welcome to Program Year 2022-2023 Webinar](#)
- [Program Year 2022-2023 Resource Guide](#)
- [Program year 2022-2023 Webinar Q&A](#)